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short news of the week

The European HE press review

+++ FRANCE: NEW SCIENCE MINISTER TO SELL UNIVERSITY REFORM FOR RE-ELECTION President Sarkozy expects to use the modernisation of French universities, masterminded by Valérie Pécresse. Her successor, Laurent Wauquiez, has to fill the shoes and sell her vision.

11-07-2011 - sciencebusiness.net/

SCIENCE BUSINESS

+++ INTERNATIONAL: FRANCE TO DECLARE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH INDONESIA "The declaration will become a solid base for more extensive and intensive bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and France in the future," said a spokesman for the Indonesian president.

13-07-2011 - thejakartapost.com

The Jakarta Post

+++ GERMANY: DROPOUT PLEDGE SECURES UNIVERSITY FUNDING In exchange for a commitment to reduce dropouts, improve access and raise teaching standards, the 37 public HE institutions of North Rhine-Westphalia has secured government funding until 2015.

10-07-2011 - universityworldnews.com/

University 
World News

+++ SERBIA: EU TEMPUS PROGRAM SUPPORTS SERBIAN EU ASPIRATIONS Tempus, the EU program designed to help the process of higher education reform in EU partner countries has highlighted the great importance of reforming foreign language studies at universities in the greater process of European intergration.

12-07-2011 - emg.rs/

+++ UK: BEST AND WORST CITIES FOR STUDENT-RELATED CRIME REVEALED Complete University Guide has compiled a ranking of crime rates in cities outside London with two or more universities and for the third time in four years, Nottingham bottoms the table with its high rate of person related violence.

07-07-2011 - thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/

+++ SWITZERLAND: SCIENTISTS FEAR PRESSURE FOR QUICK RESULTS After a decade of discussion, responsibility for HE and research has been moved to the economics ministry. However, dissenting voices believe it is a mistake to think research can direct economic growth and fear that lobby groups will pressure scientists to concentrate on fast-track research.

06-07-2011 - swissinfo.ch/

swissinfo.ch

+++ DENMARK: UNIVERSITIES WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR INCREASED ENROLMENT A record high number of young people are expected to apply for university this year but the institutions may have to pay for the student increase themselves. The government want the universities to rationalise their budgets until 2014 but the rectors want a guarantee for state financing.

04-07-2011 - information.dk/

Information

+++ RUSSIA: PLAN TO FUND 10,000 A YEAR TO STUDY ABROAD From 2012, the Russian Ministry of Education plan to finance 2000 Russian students study in a foreign country and will increase the number to 10.000 by 2015. Participants will be required to return to Russia and work after completing their studies.

08-07-2011 - universityworldnews.com/

all news - all studies - all books - all events on


www.esna.tv

ESNA's news section provides an easy-to-use format to learn about the latest developments in European Higher Education. The news are selected by our team from thousands of sources and drafted to provide you with the most comprehensive overview of events.



Dirk Jan van den Berg
(Photo: ETH Zürich)

INTERNATIONAL: EUROPE LAGGING BEHIND

Voices from both the academic and business worlds have warned against overlooking the need for more internationalisation when it comes to education and employment. If not, Europe and the US could lose out to other rapidly expanding economies.

"The rapid shift in competitive drivers in the market place will shift demand in talent. Skills needed [...] are today really only learned in a very small number of companies, causing a skills shortage in this area," says one specialist.

The stagnation is put in perspective by Dirk Jan van den Berg, President of the Delft University of Technology. He explains that many European universities are gradually being made redundant because they are unable to match the pace of development within HE as well as effectively providing the skills needed in the job market.

According to van den Berg, the European higher education sector is "lagging state funding, [and] falling international rankings and a challenging gap between research output and the need to drive innovation-led economic growth, are all converging in a 'gathering storm'." Ultimately, economic growth in BRIC countries will continue to outpace Europe and the US and change the balance in the world economy.

Mike Lynch, chief executive of a software firm, believes the solution is greater mobility for people with high qualifications while Jan van den Berg believes that in the case of Europe, encouraging more genuinely world-class science and innovation through government bodies will push the continent back to the economic front. [1536]

EU: WILL SCIENCE SAVE THE UNION?

The EU has recognised the future importance of science and research and backs the idea of increasing the area's budget by 50%. This equals a financial boost of around 100 billion Euro and negotiations are expected to take place in 2012. The hurdle lies with the Council of Ministers where the science area is in close competition with the farming commission – countries with a very politicised farming industry may be reluctant to accept the proposal.

However, the EU is still struggling to distribute the current funds before the deadline. 6,5bn Euro have been distributed yearly between 2007 and 2010, but 28.8bn Euros still need to be applied for until the budget period ends, equalling 9.6bn a year.

One of the main issues according to the midterm report is the extensive bureaucracy which discourages researchers from applying. One European MP, Britta Thomson, blames administration for scientific stagnation. "Researchers have to research – not fill out never ending piles of forms and sheets. I'm certain that less paperwork will result in more research for the same amount of money." The majority of the European Parliament concur and the Commission has been advised to simplify the procedure. [1198]

EU: EUROPEAN STUDENT UNION DEMANDS HE BUDGET INCREASE

The European Students' Union ESU is calling for a significant increase in the next EU long-term budget (2014-2020) for education, research and social policies. After the negotiations having started at the end of June, ESU underlines that the EU leaders would be misleading the public with adopting ambitious EU2020 targets but not being willing to fund correspondingly.

ESU chairman Allan Päll points out that more money for the Erasmus programme is crucial to obtain its target of 20% education mobility by 2020. ESU thinks that both the average size of the grant and the availability of grants should increase. The union does not accept a solution where mobility grants are replaced by loans, which has been contemplated by the Commission (see *Bulletin N°082 – 01-12-2010, Studies*).

Furthermore, the second main education target from the EU2020 Strategy – to reach 40% of tertiary education attainment for Europe's young adults – should be supported and prioritised through the Regional Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund, according to ESU. [1005]



Allan Päll
(Photo: Baltic Development Forum)

Press release of ESU, 13-07-2011
esu-online.org/



Đurđica Č. Škeljo (Photo: Zagrzeb)

Press release of AS,
06-07-2011 (in Croatian)
akadsolid/novosti/

CROATIA: STRIKES HAVE BEGUN

The strike organised by the Solidarity trade union (AS) at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb is now a reality. It is not clear how many other faculties have joined but following the initial union meeting, the Faculty of Engineering confirmed that they are planning to join the strike next week.

It has been noted that there are not only academics and scientific staff protesting, but also employees in other sectors within the academic community. "In the conciliation procedure [...], the ministry declared itself inactive, claiming that there is no legitimacy for them to be an active participant in mediation," said Đurđica Čilić Škeljo, one of the leaders of the Union. They "refused to participate in the process of reconciliation, but did not hesitate to threaten us by withholding our wages," she added. The assessment so far has been that the two parties are not ready for dialogue. [979]

DENMARK: WHO IS TO BLAME FOR MODERATE STUDENT MOBILITY?

Figures show that the number of Danish students who go abroad have only increased moderately since 2000. Director of LEGO Christian Iversen used this figure to highlight what he sees as a bad trend in study decisions. "The international perspective is not as important as it should be to students in the Danish system." In his eyes, it is crucial "that young people travel abroad to study and start thinking globally." The minister of education Troels Lund Poulsen was quick to declare his agreement but Magnus Pedersen, chairman of the Danish Student Union DSF, was baffled by the critique considering recent reports that Danish students are among the most mobile in Europe.

The comment section on *business.dk* features 'Oscar' who went abroad but returned home to a market that doesn't recognise his achievements. Oscar points out that the Union for Academics AAK explicitly states that study abroad often doesn't count in the evaluation of candidates for job positions. It seems there is a gap in expectations between employers, graduates and the system which the minister of education's bandwagoning proves is unknown to the government. [1146]



Eimar Veldre
(Photo: Andrus Eesmaa)

Press release by EÜL,
01-07-2011 (in Estonian)
eyl.ee/

ESTONIA: EDUCATION MINISTER OUT OF TOUCH WITH REALITY?

Last month the minister of education, Jaak Aaviksoo, unveiled his proposal to reform the national university system. He pointed out the unfairness of some admissions being funded by the state while others are self-financed and proposed a free-for-all system.

The initial response was chilly as one rector noted the outcome would be too "rigid" a system for current students. The critique grew this month when the Eimar Veldre, president of the Federation of Estonian Student Unions EÜL, objected that the required full-time study was too much to overcome by most students within the proposed framework. An appeal was sent to Aaviksoo explaining that the full load requirement was not designed for the modern higher education culture.

The minister's proposal is predicted to clash with the fact that Estonian students have the highest percentage of full-time students with full-time jobs next to their studies. Consequently, the Unions stated their opposition. [958]

GERMANY: DESPITE PAST SUCCESS, EDUCATION SYSTEM IS FAILING

Despite being the birthplace of the modern university, Germany is finding itself struggling with rising levels of academic underachievers. A report compiled by the *Wall Street Journal* shows that almost one-fifth of Germany's 15-year-olds lack proficient reading skills while just 29.8% of young adults have completed a degree from a higher education institution – below the EU average of 33.6%.

According to the government's Education Report 2010, many students from the lower tier Hauptschule don't even have the skills to gain additional training in a trade.

Considering the force of Germany's export-driven economy, the prospect of a decreasing reservoir of qualified brain power is feared by policy makers who wrestle with realistic solutions.

"In Search of a New Course",
Germany Report,
Wall Street Journal, 27-06-2011
wsj.com/

However, the educational system receives strong support in society despite academic tracks being generally linked to socio-economic factors. Jörg Dräger from the Bertelsmann Foundation warns against this type of indolence: "Being just OK is not good enough for a country with high living standards, wages and technology." [1065]

GREECE: WILL UNIVERSITIES OPEN IN SEPTEMBER?

The Ministry of Education has signalled some radical changes to higher education in Greece and the response has been disapproval and anger among professors and students. The changes will affect all aspects of the university system and concerns have been raised that the government won't stop there to curb the backlash of the economic crisis.

No part of university life has been spared: from academic year 2013/14, books will not be free anymore while course material will be digitalised to save paper. Departments and even different universities will be forced to merge or close – a process which is viewed as infeasible within the timeframe according to professors. Even university boards have been given a shake which some believe is unconstitutional.

Finally, there's the question of funds which will be reduced while the study period will be cut by a year – leading to an overall decline in quality, says concerned professors. The general disapproval has postponed to final decision to the end of August and the Ministry will have to make a compromise to secure semester start by September. [1092]

NETHERLANDS: PUSH FOR BETTER QUALIFICATION OF STUDENTS

The Dutch government has agreed on a new strategy for higher education which will focus on increasing the quality of university studies. The plan is a somewhat controversial initiative to create a more 'ambitious' climate in the university sector and has raised some concerns among student unions.

According to the strategy, students will receive a more focused degree which will also be sensitive to the demands of the labour market. However, it will demand a greater effort from students since universities are expected to focus on high achievers in the system ahead of students with weak academic records. In the future, it will be possible for institutions to select their students out of applicants and faster completion of degrees will be expected.

The strategy is worrying to student and youth organisations who fear that higher education will be restricted to elites. The Student Union LSVb has stated that they are "very disappointed" with the plan and predict that student numbers will drop. [1004]

Decisions and
Strategy Paper "Make way for
talent" (N°32.253) of the Senate,
05-07-2011 (in Dutch)
eerstekamer.nl/nieuws/



Žarko Obradović (Photo: Min)

SERBIA: STATE PLACES UNFAIR PRESSURE ON UNIVERSITIES

The dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, Dragoslav Stamenković, expressed his outrage at the apparent lack of professional discretion as education minister Žarko Obradović announced no increase in tuition fees to the press, overruling any official channel. "We have not increased the fees in years," the dean said, "I don't want that our minister Žarko Obradović determines how high university fees will be through the media." Stamenkovic argues that the increase is needed or quality of teaching will be impossible to obtain.

However, the strong reaction following the announcement has led many deans to decide at the last minute not to raise fees. The rector of Belgrade University, Branko Kovacevic, was irritated by the decision to go over the head of the HE institutions and said "it is not true what the ministry of education says, that we did not submit a proposal to increase tuition fees, and until I get an official confirmation from the ministry, fees will not be reduced." Mirko Vasiljević, dean of the Faculty of Law, has commented that universities should not be pressured by the state. [1097]



Press release, Linköping
University, 29-06-2011
liu.se/

SWEDEN: SHOCK-DROP IN FOREIGN STUDENT NUMBERS

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has shown a drop in foreign students from over 16,000 to less than 1,300. The incredible slump is viewed as a direct consequence of the new fee requirements for non-European students. As of academic year 2011/12, students outside the EU/EEA and Switzerland are subjected to pay at least 95,000 SEK (around 10,000 euro) per year. Until now, universities were free for all.

"It was expected that there would be a drop, we had seen that from other countries introducing similar schemes but how large it would be, no one could say in advance," said Torbjörn Lindqvist, an analyst from the Agency. He believes universities will have problems filling their courses.

Two scholarship programmes are already in place, but so far they only support around 300 applicants. The Chancellor at Linköping University Lars Haikola has called for substantial expansion of the programmes to make Swedish universities attractive for foreign students once again. [990]



Yusuf Ziya Özcan
(Photo: GANTEP)

TURKEY: HEADSCARF BAN ENDS IN UNIVERSITY ENROLMENT PROCESS

Despite a motion from the Peace and Democracy Party, calling for women to freely wear headscarves in universities, the Turkish Constitutional Court denied in 2008 to lift the ban in state-run universities. The debate erupted when the President of YÖK, Yusuf Ziya Özcan gave a 'personal guarantee' that female students who had been dismissed from university classes for wearing headscarves should contact the board and reiterate their right to education.

The statement caused turmoil since the legality of his statement and the ban itself was ambiguous. The ban serves to uphold the Turkish state's secularity but has been criticised for limiting personal freedom in universities.

However, a new development may question the constitutional ruling three years ago. Turkey's Student Selection and Placement Centre ÖSYM has removed a sentence from the Higher Education and Quota Guidebook that spells the conditions for photos used during enrolment and has effectively ended the ban on using headscarved photos when applying to universities. Whether it leads to other policy changes is uncertain, but chances are it will re-open the debate in the next academic year. [1162]

UK: WHITE PAPER CEMENTS NEW ERA FOR BRITISH HE

Following the shake-up of tuition fees, the British government has now approved a set of proposals which are expected to dramatically change the future of education and funding within higher education.

The reform will introduce more competition between universities and offer a flexible process for both new students and individual institutions. Supporters have said that the white paper lays the ground for "high-quality teaching and flexible and innovative models of delivery at a reduced cost" through expansion of bodies with degree-awarding powers and a new funding regime that allows 65,000 high-achieving students to pick whichever university is willing to offer a place.

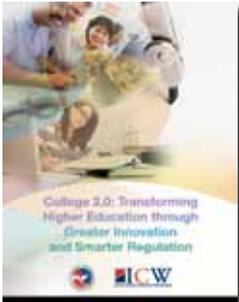
The universities minister David Willetts has said that the aim has been to "dynamise the [British higher education] system."

Still, the white paper's critics remain disillusioned. "The government [...] needs to avoid driving down standards by auctioning students to low-cost institutions," said Paul Wellings, chair of the 1994 Group of universities. "We should not encourage higher education providers to short-change students by cutting corners." Shadow business secretary John Denham was more direct: "It is clear that this White Paper, already months late, will be another example of the Tory-led government making it up as they go along." [1315]

White Paper „Higher Education:
Students at the Heart of the
System: Equality Impact
Assessment“, BIS, 01-07-2011
bis.gov.uk/

STUDIES // Each copy of your ESNA bulletin will provide information on studies which have captured our attention as pieces that may contribute to our common understanding of higher education. Our priority is to keep ESNA readers at the forefront of the knowledge pool on higher education and provide an arena for the issues raised in these studies to be heard.

up to date in higher ed research

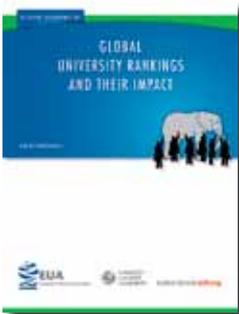


Institute For A Competitive
Workforce (ICW)
English | May 2011

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COLLEGE 2.0: TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH GREATER INNOVATION AND SMARTER REGULATION

The focus of this study, is digital technology, which has not only changed many economic sectors, it has transformed them by lowering costs, increasing access, and delivering the personalized, customized, and interactive experiences that consumers have come to expect. Higher education, however, has yet to experience the kind of disruption and subsequent gains in productivity realized by other knowledge-based industries. While colleges and universities have used technology to streamline back office functions, improve research collaboration, and give teachers new tools to manage their classrooms, they have yet tap the potential of digital technology and embrace private sector-led innovation to transform learning, dramatically lower costs, or improve overall institutional productivity.



Andrejs Rauhvargers
EUA | June 17, 2011

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GLOBAL UNIVERSITY RANKINGS AND THEIR IMPACT

The report focuses on international rankings and also refers to a number of other ongoing projects seeking to measure university performance. It describes and analyses the methodologies used by the main international rankings using only publically available and freely accessible information.

It is important that universities are aware of the degree to which they are transparent, from a user's perspective, of the relationship between what it is stated is being measured and what is in fact being measured, how the scores are calculated and what they mean.

International rankings in their present form only cover a very small percentage of the world's 17,000 universities, between 1% and 3% (200-500 universities), completely ignoring the rest.

SEEKING SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES THE LEGACY OF THE GREAT RECESSION MEANS MOVING TO NEW MODELS

In a new research paper published on-line by the Center for Studies in Higher Education at Berkeley, Katherine Lyall argues that the business models under which most public universities in the U.S. operate have become unsustainable. Structural reforms change financial and/or governance parameters, she explains, to create different incentives, which focus on performance, outcomes, and stabilizing capacity. A number of these new models are summarized including: "charter" and "public authority" models, the Virginia tiered-system model, the Oregon public-endowment model, and the UK income-contingent model.

Katharine Lyall
CSHE | July 6, 2011

[Download](#)



John Fielden, Erica Gillard
UK HE Europe Unit
April 2011

[Download](#)

A GUIDE TO OFFSHORE STAFFING STRATEGIES FOR UK UNIVERSITIES

With the ever-increasing number of students enrolled in trans-national universities, this study offers an in-depth look into the critical and shifting role of institutional offshore staff. The report focuses on nine case studies of British, Australian and American higher education institutions with branch campuses in Australia, Bangladesh, China, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam. Furthermore, it examines key questions such as: Where are institutional human resource decisions being made? How are institutions further responding to the broadening dimension of internationalisation? Moreover, how are these institutions attracting multi-nationals from outside the home and branch-campus countries?

BOOKS // Books, books and more books! In the book review section of your Bulletin, the ESNA newsroom will share with you its reviews and announcements of the latest publications on higher education. Our subscribers are also invited to contribute requests or reviews on our website to build an information pool for the community.



KUNST UND FORSCHUNG. ART AND RESEARCH

Both creatively and methodologically speaking, art and science have grown closer together: in creative processes, science demonstrates

its proximity to art, while significant aspects of art represent production based on research. The focus of this work is on the concept of research as it is understood in art, taking into particular account research into art, research through art, and research in art. In the process, it also defines the task art universities are charged with when asked to “develop the arts and make them accessible.”

Janet Ritterman, Gerald Bast, Jürgen Mittelstraß (eds.)
Springer | 2011
ISBN 978-3-7091-0752-2
English/German
257 pages softback €24.27
Order

THE INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY CHANGING THE DNA OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM THE INSIDE OUT

This book illustrates how higher education can respond to the forces of disruptive innovation, and offers a nuanced and hopeful analysis of where the traditional university and its traditions have come from and how it needs to change for the future. Through an examination of Harvard and BYU-Idaho as well as other stories of innovation in higher education, this book is offering new ways forward to deal with curriculum, faculty issues, enrollment, retention, graduation rates, campus facility usage, and a host of other urgent issues in higher education; discusses a strategic model to ensure economic vitality at the traditional university and contains novel insights into the kind of change that is necessary to move institutions of higher education forward in innovative ways. The authors decipher how universities can find innovative, less costly ways of performing their uniquely valuable functions.

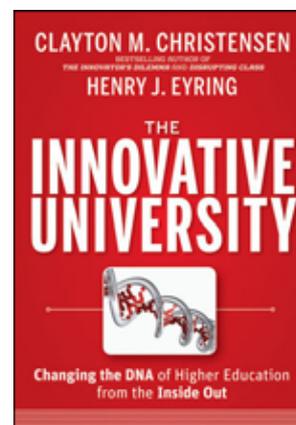
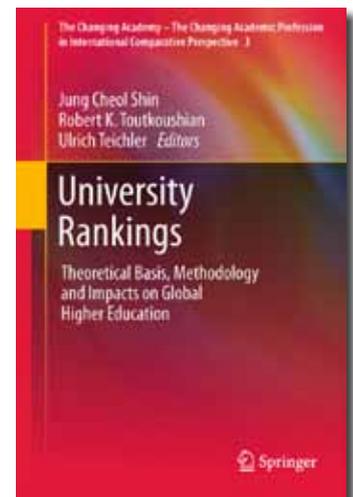
new books

UNIVERSITY RANKINGS THEORETICAL BASIS, METHODOLOGY AND IMPACTS ON GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

This analysis of university ranking surveys scrutinizes their theoretical bases, methodological issues, societal impact, and policy implications. The authors propose that university rankings are misused by policymakers and institutional leaders alike. They assert that these interested parties overlook the highly problematic internal logic of ranking methodologies even as they obsess over the surveys' assessment of their status. The result is that institutions suffer from short-termism, realigning their resources to maximize their relative rankings.

Jung Cheol Shin, Robert Toutkoushian, Ulrich Teichler (eds.)
Springer | 2011
ISBN 978-94-007-1115-0
271 pages hardcover €106.95

Order



Clayton Christensen and
Henry Eyring
Wiley | July 2011
ISBN: 978-1-1180-6348-4
512 pages hardcover €26.40

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Contributions to this Bulletin N°107/108 - July 13, 2011 by:

Tino Brömme (editor-in-chief), Lenka Jakoubkova (studies & books), Morgan Rothwell, Fabio Santelli, Claudia Sondergaard (news editor), Tijana Topalovic-Best (events), Frank Vanaerschot

EVENTS // Want to get involved? ESNA presents a selection of events in higher education that form the active core of the higher education community. Subscribers can consult our complete list of events as well as submit their own on the ESNA website.

All European Higher Ed Conferences

Highlights
October
2011



Dublin
3-5 October 2011

IRELAND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION,

The IICE is an international refereed conference dedicated to the advancement of the theory and practices in education. It promotes collaborative excellence between academicians and professionals from Education. The aim of IICE is to provide an opportunity to bridge the knowledge gap, promote research esteem and the evolution of pedagogy.

PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS A EUROPEAN SCIENCE SYSTEM INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

WZB

WISSENSCHAFTSZENTRUM BERLIN
FÜR SOZIALFORSCHUNG

Berlin
6-7 October 2011

Governments around the world are currently making great efforts to develop modern and internationally competitive science systems. In this respect, creating a European Research Area has become a widely acknowledged goal within the higher realms of politics; that is among a wide range of European and national and regional actors. The aim of this workshop is to identify and discuss central research questions, theoretical concepts and methods for exploring the future of (a) European science system(s).

IREG FORUM: NATIONAL UNIVERSITY RANKINGS ON THE RISE

IREG

Bratislava
10-11 October 2011

In spite of the growing number of national rankings, there exists a generally lack of knowledge on their current state, methodology and about the ways, rankings evolve. The Forum will concentrate on issues related to national rankings and impact rankings make. The three main aims of the Forum: to present the current trends in national rankings, to discuss relations between rankings and national higher education systems, and to build bridges between national and international (world) rankings.

ACA POLICY SEMINAR: WHAT IS THE "SOCIAL DIMENSION"?

ACA
ACADEMIC
COOPERATION
ASSOCIATION

Bruxelles
14 October 2011

This ACA European Policy Seminar will bring together researchers and institutional leaders, as well as representatives from national governments, the European Commission and other organisations, for a wide-ranging look at issues related to the social dimension. Among other things, the conversation will include perspectives on European level trends in the social composition of European higher education, and efforts to enhance access to tertiary education. Evolving notions of student service provision, and gender and diversity considerations, will also form part of the agenda.

4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITIES (WCU-4)

WCU-4

Shanghai, China,
30 October-2 November 2011

The term "world-class university" has become a catchphrase. It represents excellence in teaching and research, but more importantly it also signifies university's capacity to compete in the age of global higher education marketplace. The theme of WCU-4 is "Different Approaches to a Shared Goal". The conference sessions will address the issues concerning World-Class Universities from national perspective, institutional perspective and ranking perspective.